

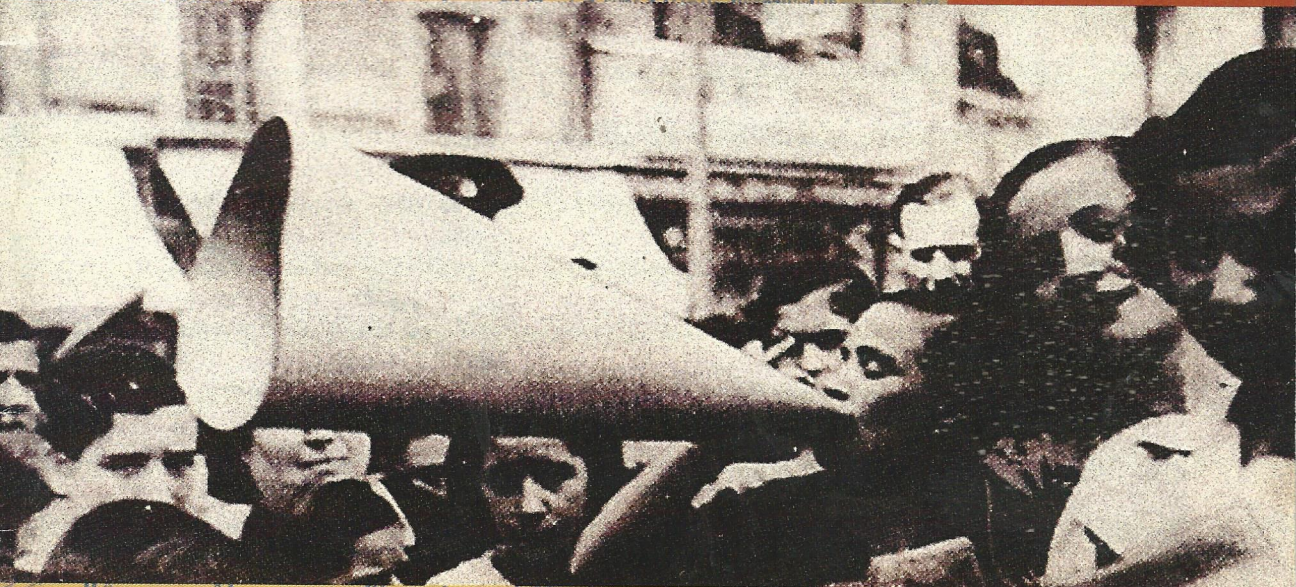
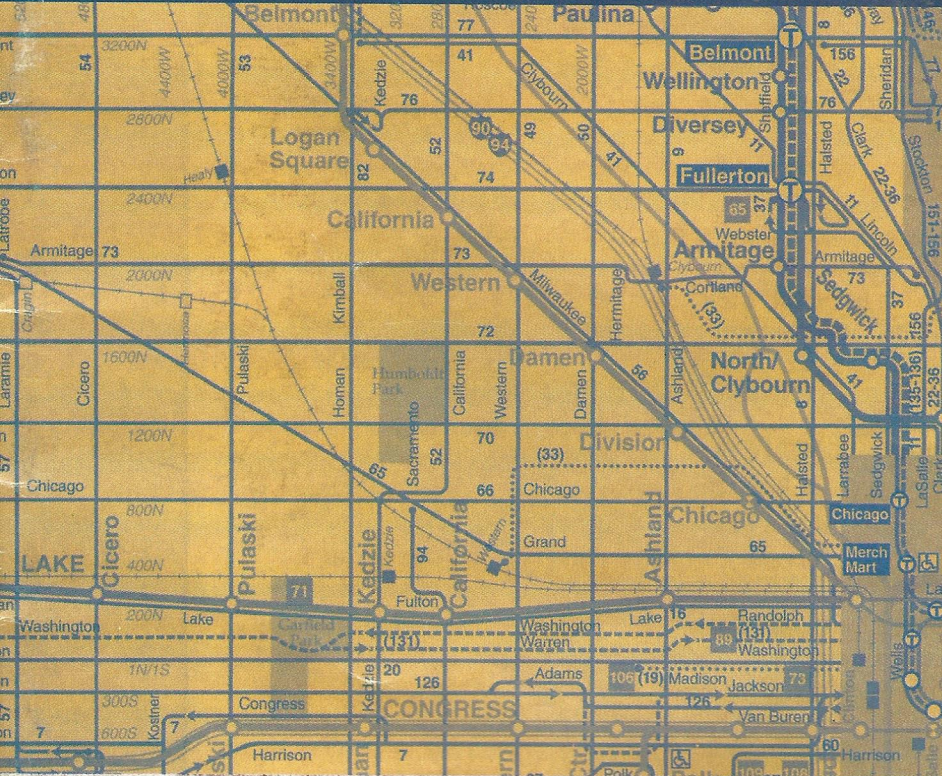
Spring 2000

ARSENAL

#1

A Magazine of Anarchist Strategy and Culture

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#1 CONTENTS

ARSENAL

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Editorial

Arsenal Collective 03 Editorial

Articles

Paul Glavin	05-10	From Love and Rage
Carlos Fernández	13-17	Pitched Battles
Alex Conway	19-21	Black Flags, Black Blocs and Mumia
Steve Swart & Jason Wade	23-26	The Battle for Our Lives

Reviews

Ernie Jacob	22	Rob the Rich
Libby Caraccioli	27	#918 Virginia St.

Columns

Deuce Bigalow & Justine Apostatus	11	Ask a Fallen Comrade
Hilary Sea	29	Karaoke

Art

Shortstop	18	Silkscreen
Kieth Graham	23-26	Photos
Nicholas Lampert & Susan Sinensky-Bietila	28	Print
Josh McPhee	29	Illustration



cover photo: spain 1936, CNT archives

Faculty Document 122 authorizes force against students. She thought, small wonder. Because it sounded as if the students were tearing up the campus and it looked as if, earlier in the day, with Vietcong flags on Linden Street and mimes in whiteface tussling with police on Bascom Hill—it looked as if what? The station was reporting Dow Day and seemingly taking part. The radio said PigPigPigPigPigPig.

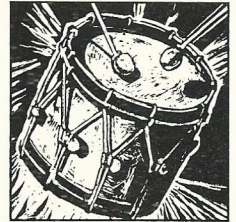
It looked as if something had happened in the night to change the rules of what is thinkable.

—Don DeLillo, *Underworld*

This selection from Part 5, Chapter 6—October 18, 1967 in Madison, WI, but this could be about Seattle on November 30, 1999. Something did happen that changed expectations and aspirations, closer now to an anarchist vision for what is possible. However briefly, the demonstrations broke the apparent permanence of the existing order. Lines were drawn, the important question asked—what side are you on? People may candy-coat their opposition to the Black Bloc, barricades, and burning dumpsters, position themselves as “friendly advisers” but at the end of the day what they want is reform—a place to negotiate inside the WTO, perhaps—and what they fear is revolt. We know they are not our leaders. The position of one segment of the Black Bloc (Acme Collective Communique www.infoshop.org/octo/wto_black_bloc.html) is concretely, uncompromisingly anti-capitalist. Critics of the Communique (numerous and varied) are never that clear or righteous. The Black Bloc and others refused the offer of protest as usual—puppets and banners, professional organizers, bureaucrats and their followers standing in comfortable co-existence with Starbucks, NikeTown and all that glass—identified and welcomed by President Clinton in his opening remarks to the WTO assembly.

Watch what happens when the WTO opens its meetings to the public or when it admits unions or when it is disbanded altogether and replaced by a more decentralized body. The same people who asked police to arrest the “violent ones” will claim victory and quietly take their assigned seat.

On Strategy—We live in profoundly non-revolutionary times when almost no one is willing to bet against capitalism or against the US government or against the police or against any central element of the status quo. The most militant actions of Seattle may not be the revolution, but they could mark the beginning of a different outlook, a shuffling of the deck, placing bets for our team. The anarchists demonstrated again that they can put together one-offs. An event here, an action there, wow! an anarchist band hits the charts or neat! anarchism shows up in a movie. What Seattle doesn’t tell us yet is what comes next. April 16? May Day? N30 is the new yardstick by which all demonstrations will be measured. But this in itself is not “strategy”. Are the actions taken to stop the WTO the beginning of a new development—a strategy that connects, in a significant way, anarchists and their projects world-wide? Will Seattle be our first step from “here” to “there”?



ARSENAL

Work in coalitions with liberals and reformists inevitably means hankering after a few concessions or lowering the height of the bar at the start. What gets compromised? Concessions from coalitions, like reforms from the state, play out as a sick game of good cop-bad cop. Anarchists who ignore this reality end up prisoners of the good cop

ism, the culture we know best feels like baggage, something to overcome. Work. School. Out your front door. We're seeking to leave the culture we know. Where do we go for what will sustain us? Where do we find a persistent potential for revolution?

As anarchists, we live in a perpetual absence of anar-

to do more. Anarchist culture is a movement, a potential avalanche of projects, groups, creations, networks, voices, encounters, and more. This, our real culture, will keep us from being absorbed into an empty promise from the state. This culture will be the vehicle for spreading and living our ideas and building our movement.

Concessions from coalitions... play out as a sick game of good cop, bad cop

(liberal politics) or the bad cop (repression). Still, there is significant work to do. Some of this work will only be achieved in alliance with those who are comfortable with the state. The choice to work in "progressive" coalitions is sometimes the easiest, most pragmatic, most convenient, most accommodating to certain allies. Many of us choose coalition work as a way to see a larger mass, to join a project already underway, or to make a meaningful difference in someone's life even if the means are far from ideal. What anarchists must achieve is an essentially revolutionary outlook: We work toward winning real practical victories while simultaneously changing the rules about how these victories are won and what they mean in the long term.

On culture—What are the characteristics that make up anarchist culture? How is anarchism cultivated and transmitted? Within capital-

ist culture. Our culture is not just "anarchist art" or the colors red and black or a kind of t-shirt or a band. Building institutions, creating images and sounds, our relationship to work, our desire to play and especially our struggles and resistance can convey something, a hint, of what makes up anarchist culture. We look for the events and people and stories that lead up to where we are now and will compel us to go forward. This is our air, our nourishment. This is what must be dug up, following the deepest roots of arts and language and collective efforts.

When we actualize our principles, when we struggle with our notions of right and wrong, we contribute to the development of a real anarchist culture. The aim should be to give ourselves the vitality we need by listening to many perspectives, agreeing and disagreeing, and learning new things. All the great and small things our comrades do should lead us

About Arsenal—It is not about the past, because like the kids say, History is what's happening. A close look at anarchist strategy and culture, this is our ammunition, the materials and symbols necessary for our world and our revolution. This magazine takes stock of what is in the works and what we are hoping to build. If we don't have the answers we can still ask the questions.

¡Salud!

The Arsenal Collective.

FROM LOVE AND RAGE

A LOOK AT THE LEGACY

by Paul Glavin

For close to ten years Love and Rage, in one form or another, existed as an organized expression of revolutionary anarchism, representing many of the best and worst aspects of the left. The Love and Rage project involved hundreds of people over many years who took the role of revolutionary opposition seriously while confronting forms of domination in their own work and daily lives. Those involved were committed to ideas and education, to democratic process and organization, to street militancy, and towards the end, to long-term community organizing.

On the down side Love & Rage also had elements of a guilt-based, middle-class politics of self-sacrifice and, among some, a moralism better suited to Christian missionaries. There were those who sought a more "pure" membership, purged of the sins of the dominant society. This took the form of an inward looking examination of each person's background and preferences that began to lose perspective. A principled, self-reflective commitment to anti-sexism, for example, turned into a bizarre attempt to break down ego-boundaries and reshape character, in a small group setting. There were also attempts to utilize guilt to get people to do more, to contribute more money, or *not* voice their opinions. These tendencies were derided by others, however, limiting their contagion and rendering them effective only on those already susceptible.

Love and Rage was made up of many different groups and individuals representing a variety of tendencies and with varying backgrounds within anarchism, mak-

Love & Rage... existed as organized expression of revolutionary anarchism

ing generalizations difficult. What they all had in common was an activist orientation and a generally left politics (as opposed to the



LOVE AND RAGE

neo-primitivist, anti-civilization perspectives of *Anarchy Magazine* and John Zerzan, forexample) They were also primarily young. Love and Rage members shared a sense of urgency, of the immediacy of various struggles and of the need to get organized and act, and a general willingness to participate in coalition with other left and liberal groups to pursue similar objectives. For instance, Love and Rage participated in stopping Operation Rescue's attempts to shut down abortion clinics, while arguing for direct forms of democracy within meetings and extra-legal forms of militancy and direct action in demonstrations.

The various Love and Rage local groups which existed over the years, notably in places like Minneapolis, New York, and Detroit, were constituted by extremely dedicated activists who sustained an interest and involvement in political issues and organizing that continues to be rare. The local groups often combined a consciousness of group dynamics and internal hierarchies with an unbelievable ability to put on public forums discussing current events, while also participating in various coalitions and organizing efforts and demonstrations.

It has been two years since Love and Rage dissolved and it seems appropriate to assess some of the organization's contributions in light of what is going on today. This account will be partial and necessarily incomplete, hopefully being one of the first of many written reflections.

Ideas and Theory

One of Love and Rage's positive contributions was that it took ideas and theory seriously in the

effort to democratically develop a political statement for the organization. This commitment was also reflected in discussions, leaflet writing, and forums. Similarly, despite some tendencies toward sensationalism, the organization's newspaper, also called *Love and Rage*, demonstrated the group's seriousness about ideas.

Many heated and protracted debates took place between various factions on a variety of issues, mostly within the context of the ongoing process of developing a common political statement for the organization. One of the first debates was actually over whether to even have one.

There was a strong faction, mostly grouped around the Anarchist Youth Federation, which took an anti-theory position, advocating unity through action. The relation between ideas and action, of theory and practice, were hotly debated. This faction argued that theoretical discussion was a waste of time and the working class would better respond to simple language. Their proposed model for *Love and Rage* was the British paper *Class War*. Despite the obstinacy of the anti-theory faction, and their condescending assumptions concerning the intelligence of the working class, the project of democratically developing a common political statement went forward.

Although the organization voted to develop a statement, the time devoted to it was filled with ongoing discussion that never resulted in a finished document.

Nonetheless, the discussions created a lively forum for radical ideas and competing revolutionary strategies. This allowed a relatively large number of radicals to

collectively think through what was going on in the world. At the same time, it involved a variety of people in this process through participation in working groups, writing draft statements, and debating positions at plenaries and in the pages of the paper.

This kind of anarchist intellectual culture does not exist today. The great thing about Love and Rage's attempt to develop a political statement, in addition to its participatory character, was the way the discussion of ideas took place in the context of an organized attempt to change the world. Thus the ideas, although sometimes abstract or theoretical, were part of an engagement with society.

Too often today, discussions of radical ideas are purely abstract, with little or no relation to organizing work or a larger public. Intellectual work goes on in isolation, or is perverted in service to academic requirements. And on the other hand, as is so often the case, organizing work goes on in a rather rote fashion, with little room to explore theoretical dimensions or argue how tactics are part of a long-term revolutionary strategy or theory of the world.

One current organization which promotes anarchist scholarship, The Institute for Anarchist Studies, funds individual writers, not collective writing projects, because the applications for funding it receives are from individuals. A majority of these applications can be divided into two categories: anarchists involved in academics, and activist anarchists struggling to theorize their practical work. Both could benefit from engagement with a more participatory intellec-

This kind of anarchist intellectual culture does not exist today.

tual culture; on the one hand so their work is less abstract and academic, and on the other to help sharpen and develop their ideas.

With the demise of Love and Rage and other organizations engaged in collective, democratic writing processes, like the Youth Greens, the anarchist intellectual scene has become atomized and fragmented. It is rare to find collective writing projects or popular forums for discussing radical ideas. Without them, people often drift away, or begin to regurgitate mainstream thought about the inevitability of the market, or the state, or about how people are fundamentally greedy and will never change. The dominant ideological, economic, and social realities in America are strong and well entrenched, taking their toll on even the most stubborn militant. Without a vibrant anarchist public sphere to create and maintain an alternative worldview, it is harder for individuals to maintain a commitment to radical politics. And without an anarchist organization, it is impossible to change society.

Anti-Racism and Anti-Imperialism

Perhaps most significantly, Love and Rage brought the issue of race into North American anarchist concerns in a way that was not previously present, at least among white anarchists. This occurred as self-education on race issues, learning about the key role of race relations in unlocking historical forms of oppression in the US context. Simultaneously, Love and Rage prioritized an anti-



LOVE AND RAGE

racist agenda within anarchist organizing.

Anti-Police brutality work, and in cities like Minneapolis, neighborhood cop-watches became a cornerstone of Love and Rage members' work. Love and Rage members played central roles in Anti-Racist Action, where today many former members continue to be active.

A further aspect of Love and Rage's anti-racism involved the commitment to organizing across borders to work with comrades in Mexico City, while also making Chiapas and Zapatista solidarity work a high priority. More generally the anti-imperialist orientation of the organization implied an understanding of the privileged and exploitative position of the majority of the West vis-a-vis the rest of the world, a relation based in race and also class.

Some in the organization advocated a more uncritical anti-imperialism. But many others saw that it is possible both to support people in their resistance, by opposing US military and economic domination, and to maintain a principled engagement with opposition movements that does not abdicate our responsibility to be critical of authoritarian practices and tendencies. The central question

here is what place North American anti-imperialists have in criticizing aspects of nationalist struggles we disagree with, such as statism or the attempt to forge a national identity by suppressing diversity within a people. Those maintaining a position of critical solidarity won an early debate on the "national question" against those who advocated an unqualified solidarity.

Black Bloc

Early on writers and organizers for Love and Rage emphasized the need to develop a "fighting movement." This was a provocative way of describing a movement which takes the political offensive while being willing to defend itself against the police in the streets.

The German autonomist movement was a significant influence on Love and Rage and other young radicals in the late 1980s and early '90s. There were successive waves of autonomist movement in Germany, but the anti-imperialist, street fighting, black bloc version made the biggest impression. In addition to squatting housing and social and cultural spaces for themselves, the autonomen, as they are known, formed large blocs at demonstrations to provide for their own safety against police attacks and to allow more latitude in the streets. The blocs involve people dressing alike and covering their faces with masks to prevent the police from identifying individuals. Protesters link arms and move together, preventing the police from dispersing people or grabbing individuals.

A black bloc was called for at one of the two big marches in D.C.

against the Gulf War. Roughly three hundred black-clad anarchists showed up for the contingent. Being in a bloc demonstrated a large, well-organized anarchist presence in the anti-war effort. It also allowed for more militant action than shuffling down the street chanting tired slogans. For instance, windows were smashed at the Treasury Department building and a break-away march towards the World Bank building took place. Along the way bank windows were smashed and the World Bank building itself was spraypainted. Because of the security of the bloc, only one comrade was grabbed by the police, and that person was unarrested from the police

by others.

All

involved ran to the safety of the bloc, which

effectively prevented the police from arresting anyone.

A line of development runs from the 1988 Pentagon Action, where anarchists had an organized contingent and distributed *RAGE!*, a precursor of *Love and Rage*, right through to the Seattle Black Bloc. The contemporary idea of a non-pacifist, extra-legal national contingent got started at that 1988 protest against the US wars in Central America. One of the main organizing groups for that contingent, and for organizing *Love and Rage*, was RABL, the Revolutionary Anarchist Bowling League. RABL held several successful, and some not-so-successful, actions in the mid-to-late 1980s in Minneapolis and published their own occasional paper, the *RABL Rouser*.

A line of development runs from the 1988 Pentagon Action right through to the Seattle Black Bloc.

The Black Bloc in Seattle is the most successful use yet of this style of street organization. It helped create a visible and formidable anarchist presence, while enabling highly effective offensive action against corporate property. Combined with the violence of the police against the largely non-violent demonstrators, the Black Bloc is the main reason Seattle became a household word around the world. The Black Bloc anarchists struck a chord, and anarchism, in however simplified a form, seemed to be everywhere.

The Seattle Black Bloc shows there is a potential for developing a far more organized and effective form of street protest. In addition,

the larger anti-globalization movement involves many anarchists.

For exam-

ple, anarchist principles are informing much of the organizing of the Direct Action Network, the main organizing group of the Seattle demonstrations and the anti-IMF/World Bank protests in DC.

Love and Rage did a lot to help develop an anti-authoritarian understanding of globalization, sometimes referred to as neoliberalism. In part this was done in conjunction with the perspective put forward by the Zapatistas and Chiapas solidarity activists. Another aspect was simply extending the traditional anarchist critique of capitalism, hierarchy and social domination to contemporary trends. It is good to see this type of work partly pay off in the form of a renewed popular and radical movement which, at

least implicitly, is against capital and has an anarchist and ecological dimension.

Defining Anarchism

With the decline of Love and Rage, anarchists in the Pacific Northwest have taken the lead in defining anarchism. The positive contributions they bring are a no compromise, militant attitude, a direct action approach, and an attempt to pre-figure the new society in collective living, counter-institutions and sustainable practices like intensive, organic gardening.

An organization like Love and Rage could help coordinate activity and provide a forum for presenting revolutionary anarchist ideas to a larger public through its newspaper. Unfortunately the only national anarchist publications we have now are *Anarchy* and *Fifth Estate*. While occasionally publishing something interesting, these publications generally put their own regressive anti-civilization spin on anarchist actions and ideas. They present their rather warped neo-primitivist version of anarchism as being the only one while caricaturing the politics represented by Love and Rage (and Murray Bookchin) as Leninist Old Left.

Love and Rage had its own problems, but at least it brought a social and left perspective to anarchism that saw the way out of capitalism and statism through social movements and direct forms of democracy, not simply smashing technology and returning to a hunter-gatherer existence. The organization maintained a healthy insurrectionary perspective which held out the necessity of social revolution. It recognized

that anarchists need to be an organized force for social change, and that day-to-day activist work is an important part of this process. And it maintained the importance of ideas, debate and popular education.

In the future any new revolutionary anarchist organization would need to be a bottom-up, grass-roots confederation of existing local groups. The emphasis in Love and Rage should have been (and our focus now should be) promoting and assisting in the formation of new local groups, affinity groups, and political collectives. Love and Rage erred in not putting more effort in this direction. There definitely was a strong centralizing faction in the organization that successfully took the group in the direction of federation, rather than confederation, arguing against those who advocated a more decentralized approach. It should come as little surprise that those folks no longer call themselves anarchists.

It may be a while before we again see a continental anarchist organization on the scale of Love and Rage. Despite this anarchism seems to be in pretty good shape as we head into the twenty-first century. If we do things right, we can create new organizational forms while learning from the mistakes of the past, as well as from the promising contributions of a group like Love and Rage.

ASK A FALLEN COMRADE

Dear Emma,

A few weeks ago a new boy started coming to the Sunday night meetings of my affinity group. (He must be too busy to attend the Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday brunch meetings.) I don't know his name (when we check-in he always passes) or even the color of his eyes (he hides them with dreadlocks that he arranges across his forehead in this cute way.) We have talked a few times over chips and hummus at the meeting break and I found out that he is considering joining our affinity group but has issues with our take on non-violence.

As you may have guessed, Emma, despite his bad politics I think I'm falling in love with this boy! I know it seems hopelessly romantic, but I can see myself being his long-term jail-support person, just like you were for Berkman. The problem is, if I get busy on him—and I better get busy getting busy, since any Sunday night meeting could be his last—I'm afraid the Affinity Group will accuse me of horizontal recruitment (an issue that has caused a schism in the Group's past.)

Emma, what should I do? The AG will purge me rather than go through another schism over horizontal recruitment. But would it be right for me to ignore my feelings and not allow what could become a beautiful relationship to happen? Besides, I know that if we got together, the new comrade would definitely decide to stay in our affinity group.

Please help! I have to act fast (several other members of the AG also seem to be interested in this boy. Emma he is a hottie!)

Mil gracias compañera,

Reluctant Recruiter

Dear Reluctant—

First of all, what are you doing meeting on a Sunday? Sundays are the only days afforded to the working classes for freedom from their drudgery, and just like the Puritan eunuchs you're attempting to make them monotonous and dull with your undoubtedly drawn-out meetings. I could hardly blame this boy you refer to if he never returned, having found a more pleasant pastime to occupy his one day in seven of freedom.

That aside, Reluctant, it's said that a lawyer never asks a question without already knowing the answer. At the risk of putting you in bad company I'm afraid I suspect you of the same. Asking me about whether to act on your love—when I've always said that love is an expression! Be glad that you're living in times when women have a choice other than wife, celibate, or prostitute. Love is the soul's highest flight, and each love relation is unique. And it seems you are rightly attracted to this boy for the qualities of his heart and not the quantities in his pocket.

As for the boy's politics, well, when I was young I felt much like you do. No man or woman either was much good to me unless they were committed body and soul to the attentat, the Deed of Propaganda, the act of facing the oppressor across the barrel of a gun. Didn't I walk the streets to raise money for Sasha's pistol? No takers, but I got the money somehow. Yet in the years after my Sasha lived the ideal, individual acts of terrorism came to be thought of as counter-revolutionary. My point is that theories change. Consider, therefore, seeking other qualities in this boy. Ask him, does he believe in Sex Monopoly? Ask him, will he inhibit you in your revolutionary activities because of your sex? Ask him, does he view you as property? These answered satisfactorily, my advice is, proceed. Like revolution, love is a thought carried into action. Besides, victims of chastity are subject to insomnia and headaches, and become peevish, even grouchy as a result of societally enforced celibacy, thereby frightening off future potential conquests. Liebchen, don't let it happen to you!

(You might do well to be wary if after the horizontal act recruitment of your boy follows too quickly and thoroughly. Lenin, remember, changed his banner to follow the tide, one minute "All power to the Soviets," the next, "Rob the Robbers.")

As for your affinity group, remind them that from time immemorial love has defied all man-made laws, and broken through the iron bars of convention. It has even broken the iron bars of class. Love may join a king with a commoner. It's certainly more powerful than the dis-



approval and threats and, dare I say censorship of your comrades. At your next Criticism remind them that the individual does not exist for the State, nor for Society, nor for the Nation, nor even, may I add, for Themselves. Remind them that censorship can only lead to hypocrisy. We never saw as many drunkards as during Prohibition.

If your group sees fit to purge you for pursuit of free love with this boy, it's time to leave them. Now, it's most effective and I daresay more exciting to leave an antagonistic gathering with a rousing statement sure to boil your audience. So if it comes down to it, leave 'em riled. Here's a quote you can use that I think is quite appropriate to your situation:

"Censorship from comrades has the same effect on me as police persecution; it makes me surer of myself." (point index finger at ceiling.)

If what follows is less than a riot, at a lull in the angry jeers directed at you, add:

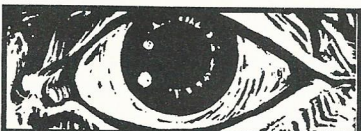
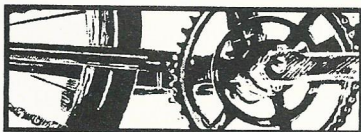
"Individuals' development has been a continuous struggle against the fetishes of his own creation." (raise fist, exit.)

Let me know how it works.

Love, Red Emma

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PITCHED BATTLES

FOOTBALL AND ANARCHY

by Carlos Fernández

In the Aguascalientes IV of Zapatista territory, we played football between two long, wood-plank dormitories, aiming for net-less goals with sagging crossbars. The ball would often fly on to the buildings' roofs. This would not take it out of play, but instead lead to a brief struggle underneath the eaves to capture the ball as it rolled down. Those were crazy moments, charged with unreality because we played all out in the middle of a poverty alien to visitors like me, and even as military planes made their regular fly overs. On that field of strangeness in Mexico, some of us, visitors and hosts, came to know each other—if only slightly, at least sincerely. Football, played to fit the circumstances, opened connections between us, across barriers of languages, values, and even fitness. I was having a hard time with the altitude.

There are certain powerful ways in which the football field, or pitch, duplicates the social field. First, as history; it is a location of social activity. Nationalities, classes, and smaller social identities act out passionately on and around the pitch. Next, as collective formation; groups assemble into myriad shapes on and off the pitch, as elsewhere in societies. Football can touch off the powerful emotions that drive affiliations like teams, fan clubs, hooligan gangs, and beyond. Third, as style, the ways individuals and their communities or societies state their uniqueness; in football, this occurs mostly in the styles of



England vs. Scotland, 1887

play. Maybe most famously, Brazil produced a fluid kind of game obviously developed from capoeira, the Afro-Brazilian martial art. Fourth and most importantly, the football field reproduces the interdependence that characterizes the social; when people enthusiastically participate in the sport, they redefine it and themselves.

I do not seek to romanticize or intellectualize play here. I hope to inspire a way of looking at football (or any game) as a very real elaboration of people's philosophies, politics, and hopes. This makes it an important site of production of power relations. On the pitch, power is named, shared, contested, and felt. Its distribution never settles until the whistle blows. We need an anarchist attack on the sport's wider fields of form and organization. Kicking a ball around can be made as anarchist as barricading a street or forming a co-op.

How can football be anarchist? To begin, we can be sure that anarchists have played football as

long as either has been around. The relationship is often explicit, as in the early 20th century, when the club now known as Argentinos Juniors was called the Chicago Martyrs and another club was begun in a Buenos Aires anarchist library. We can also confidently guess that some of the Barcelona team that toured North America in 1937, raising money for the Republic, would identify themselves with their city's anarchists. And, one should question, were the striking professional players in Paris of May 1968 very different from the students or workers when they demanded their own part of freedom? Could the anti-authoritarian fans of St. Pauli leave their politics at the stadium gates or forget football before a meeting or protest? If many spaces and actions are often anarchist primarily by association, then football has an old anarchist face.

Also, people's love for the game has translated into their love for freedom and justice, as in the case of the '42 Dynamo Kiev team, the Algerians who quit French teams as their country fought for independence, or non-white European professionals like Ruud Gullit, who've taken stands against

racism, greed, and facism. As people have reproduced their values, identities, and desires within the game, they've stretched football into something more. Telling from their website

Dynamo Kiev

A monument in the Ukraine commemorates the players of the 1942 Dynamo Kiev team. During the German occupation they committed the insane act of defeating Hitler's squad in the local stadium. Having been warned, "If you win, you die," they started out resigned to losing, trembling with fear and hunger, but in the end they could not resist the temptation of dignity. When the game was over all eleven were shot with their shirts on at the edge of a cliff.

—Eduardo Galeano

www.chumba.com/_footie.html), Chumbawumba sponsors the Wetherby Athletic, a youth team, out of their passion for the game. Yet, their politics come out right on the kids' jerseys, emblazoned with the word "anarchy."

Politics do not appear as aberrations or accidents in football. They are part of people's interaction with the game. The sport retains its shape as a game from the heights of a World Cup final to games played on uneven fields in rebel Mexico. Its players, basic rules, and objectives remain the same. The sport changes in how people come together around its fundamental elements. The Barras Bravas of South America; the hooligans, ultras, and carnival fans of Europe—these provocative

Barras Bravas

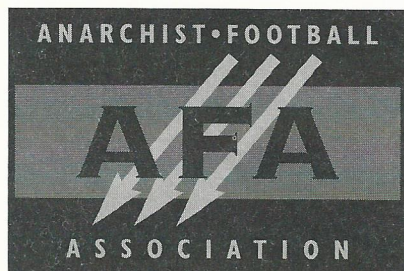
In Chile, at the edges of the usual fandom that follows professional teams, young people form barras bravas (fierce clubs), the dangerous side of spectatorship. These groups swelled into the thousands in the late eighties and early nineties, filled by those left out of Pinochet's economic "miracle". When state reaction to football-related violence increased, they would split into "working groups" to continue their post-game parties or fights with rivals and police. These fans grew up in poor barrios, under surveillance and repression. Their clubs, as elsewhere around the world, brought together collective discontent and power that took over the stadiums and nearby streets.

fringes of fandom suggest that new, energetic cultural forms can emerge from the football field. Although we won't fill stadiums very soon, the same is happening today among anarchists.

Anarchist football appeared in the last few years with, unsurprisingly, no single name, style, or organization. In the US mid-Atlantic region, people play

as the Anarchist Soccer League. On the west coast, anarchists and others play without names.

In the midwest, the Arsenal, Riot and Swarm play as the Anarchist Football Association. The last is an association or federation or network only by the minimum definitions of the terms. Some meet weekly, some yearly. The games last one or two hours. What happens before, during, or after follows no set outline. In a peculiar

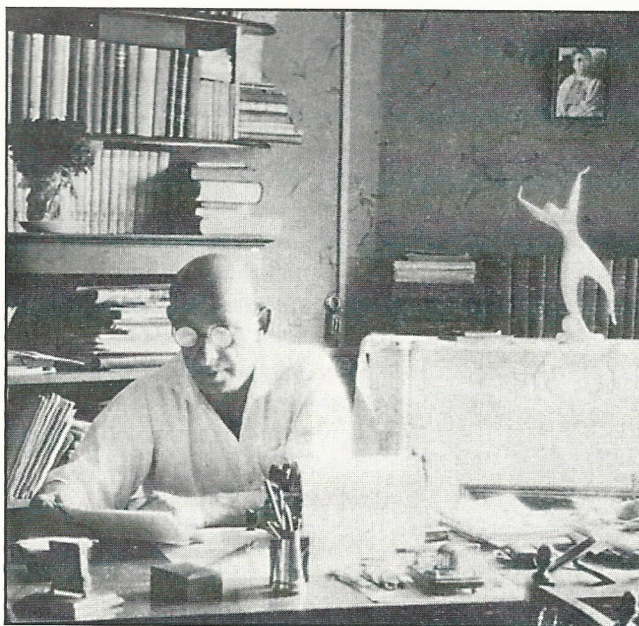


anarchist way, this new face of football repeats the history of the sport, the way collective politics and passion fuse on the pitch.

The Anarchist Football Association, as an example, can be considered a hypothetical, proposed, or working form for anarchist community. It might be nothing more than an anagram on patches worn by a bunch of people or it might be a real, large, but latent anarchist constituency. Its Chicago affiliate, ostensibly the most organized one (with a phone list, uniforms, schedule, etc.), includes individuals whose frequency of play, degrees of friendship, and political beliefs all vary widely. Outside the Association, an assortment of very non-regulation games are played in cities such as Portland, Berkeley, and San Francisco. This range of incidence points to a mutual redefinition of anarchism and football. Each one is transformed by join-

ing the other. Anarchist games cleave football away from the commodification pushed by Nike, Major League Soccer, and Federation of International Football Associations. And they give anarchism another rejuvenated cultural formation, a new shape for its expression.

What is a cultural formation? Fantasy might be an unavoidable term for what I'm trying to describe. And it's not one that I would immediately throw out. When I discovered *Profane Existence* in high school and saw the photos of huge European black blocs, I imagined that it would feel incredible to participate in such a collective action. A couple of years later, I unexpectedly joined the black bloc in a march against the Gulf War. I was hooked. Ever since, my ties to and identification with anarchists have wavered, but every upswing has hinged on such ambiguous images and fleeting moments of community. All the exchange, cooperation, and affinity that occur on the football field can



Alexander Berkman in Paris 1927 (photograph by Senya Fleshin); note figurine dribbling a football on the counter below the picture of Emma Goldman on wall.



Shantytown football field, Chile.

serve the same functions of identification and loyalty.

Anarchist football can express collective identities through teams, specifically in how they practice anarchist ideals and build collective skills. Deciding on positions and strategies without a coach, training without pressure, using players of all skill-levels; who could accomplish these beside anarchists? And couldn't we use the communication skills and other cooperative skills in football in our direct actions? One skill that experienced football players often know is support. On the field, a player supports others by putting herself where her teammates can pass to her in order to keep the ball away from defenders or to advance it up the field. This technique involves awareness of where your comrades are and what they might do. During extra-legal work, such skills make actions faster, tighter and safer. Many other parts of playing football can feed into our tactics, and the reverse can also be true. A teammate of mine alludes to this mutual relationship in her declaration, "We kick. We run. We kick ass. We run away."

Non-technical aspects of football can also reinforce our collective political efforts, especially on a long term basis. For example,

Cameroon and affinity

At the 1990 World Cup, after its amazing win over the defending champion, Argentina, Cameroon lost to England while playing a better game than their opponent. Tied at one-one, Cameroon got possession of the ball just outside their penalty box. Two players ran lazily near the ball, making their way toward midfield. Ahead of them, another four players shifted around for the impending attack. The English defense took a trench-like formation, lined up in a crescent in front of the their own penalty box.

The attack began as an apparently languid approach. The six Cameroon players morphed between two and three groups of three or two players, tethered together around the ball. They passed it between each other, avoiding attempted interceptions by English defenders. Cameroon's shifting triangles had the defenders twisting their necks to figure out where the ball might go. The groups shifted around in front of the English line for a few moments, until a single pass and a sudden shift of speed left the defenders behind and Cameroon went ahead two-one. It would take two questionable penalty calls and overtime for England to wrest the victory away.

the idea of affinity as a strategic organizing principle—people taking political action in small groups based on mutual trust—is an anarchist innovation, but one which can be hard to realize. Playing football together regularly can provide a concrete sense of affinity. All the communication and cooperation that make up the game congeal into a feeling of mutual trust and understanding, a feeling that, once known, can be more easily achieved in other contexts. It's a beautiful thing when a few people together make an impact greater than the sum of their parts. If we don't see it enough in politics, we can at least find it in the best examples of football.

In one moment during Cameroon's near-victory over England in a 1990 World Cup semifinal, affinity took on a real,

visible shape. The attack that put Cameroon one goal ahead was thrilling not only because it shamed one of the best teams, but also because it was executed so brilliantly. That Cameroon's play was both a thing of plain beauty and an underdog's success suggests how a moment of affinity can be poetic and concrete. In a recent Chicago Arsenal game, a teammate's simple pass surprised the other team and suddenly put our team into a fast break. After a couple more passes, we scored, as stunned as our opponents. Aren't such lucky chains of events the way we often imagine resistance, if not revolution, might happen? The magic of play touches the revolutionary imagination like poetry or art: It can spark a vision and feeling of things changing.

Of course, football doesn't appeal to everyone. But neither does any art or other cultural expression. What good does it do for revolution if its appeal isn't universal? The question is not a zero-sum situation, where we should either use the sport or discard it. The game can be changed. We can build team cohesion and skills with more in mind than just winning games. We can make it fun for more people, even for those who don't play. The potential of football as a part of political struggles requires that the sport be opened up again.

Transforming Football

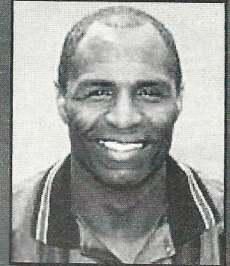
No longer the possession of the few comfortable youths who played by copying, this foreign sport became Brazilian, fertilized by the creative energies of the people discovering it. And thus was born the most beautiful soccer in the world...

—Eduardo Galeano

Skilling sharing and affinity must be made inclusive. On the football field, anarchist teams should adjust the pace and mood to keep new players involved. The game allows this by its fluid nature: offense can involve more passing than sprinting and defense can concentrate on containing its opponents. This general advice needs to be made more specific with regards to gender. Women should be a part of every team and all macho behavior should be kept off the field. It would be a great day when sexist put-down used against players, a common aspect of professional play, would be replaced with banter like, "Don't be such a male chauvinist! Pass the ball!" (I'm sure it would be catchier, though.)

Toward a conclusion

It seems to be about simplicity: Football, at its heart, is a simple game, and anarchism, from the heart, is a simple wish. The sport's fundamental ease has taken it around the world and dragged us with it. It's one of the most wonderful things when we meet someone new at a game, or our bonds strengthen at dinner or a bar after we play. If the football field is essentially a meeting place for play, it must then extend to wherever people enjoy being with each other. That's where anarchy might start, or at least where it can blossom. When the idea of self-organization can be made obvious by how a goal is scored or how a team trains, anarchism seems like no great feat. Bringing football and anarchism together is a natural, symbiotic thing. The pitch, what Gramsci called a "great open-air kingdom of human loyalty," needs to be made ours.



Luther Blisset

Who is Luther Blisset?

Luther Blisset was one of the few black players in Italy when he played for Milan's San Siro club in the 1980's. Recently his name was taken out of retirement by some Italian anarchists.

Read the story at http://news.bbc.co.uk:80/hi/english/sport/football/newsid_293000/

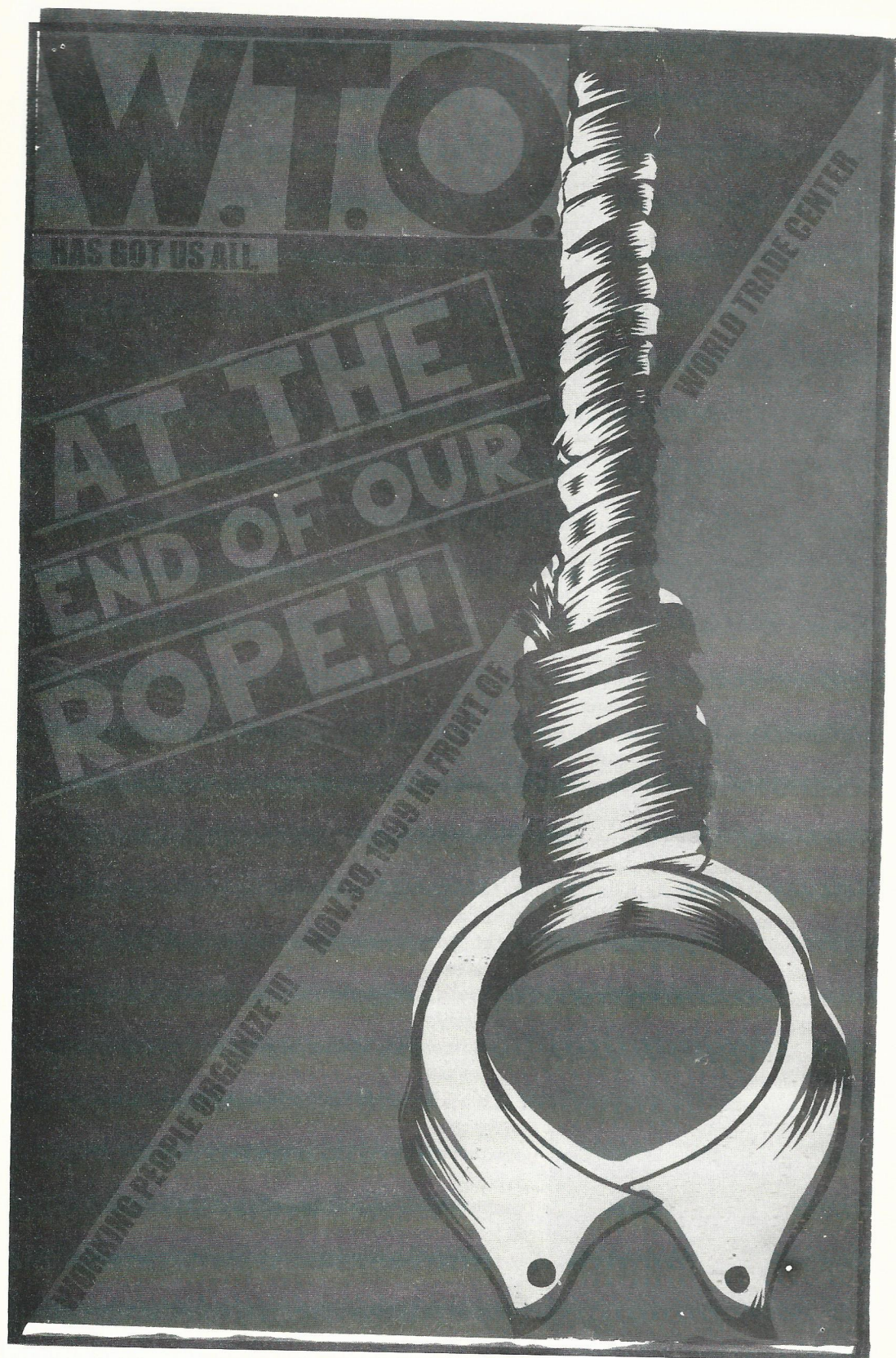
Who is Luther Blisset?

From the Luther Blisset manifesto:

"Today we can infuse ourselves with vitality by exploring any possibility of escaping the conventional identities...we must create a scientific strategy of the merry prank...one of the most interesting practices of merry prank is the so-called **MULTIPLE NAME**, a technique particularly improved by the **NEOISTS**...The Luther Blisset Project has been launched in the Summer of '94...Luther Blisset is not an (anti)artist like **KAREN ELIOT**: s/he's a cultural terrorist... Anyone can be Luther Blisset... Become Luther Blissett."

Who is...?

A football player, a game, a project, a conspiracy, an experience, a prank, a network, a secret, a formation?



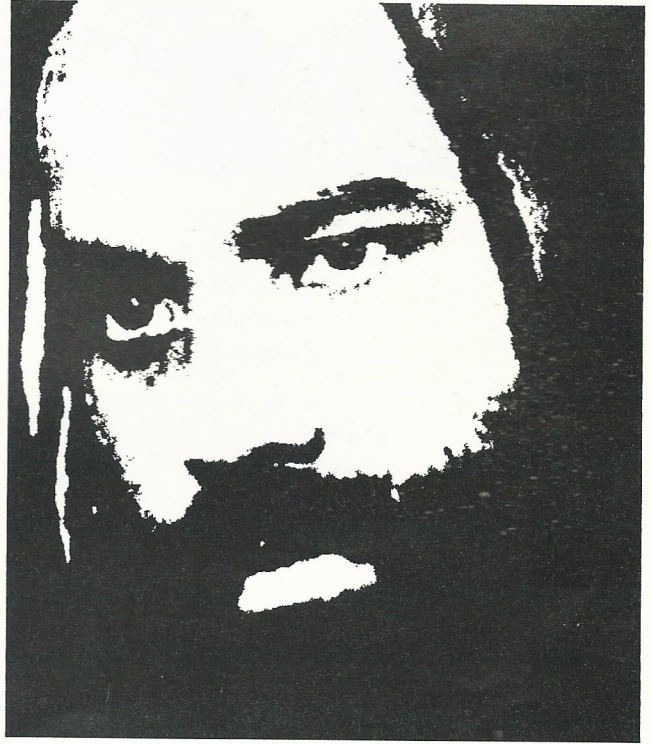
BLACK FLAGS, BLACK BLOCS AND MUMIA ABU JAMAL ANARCHISTS INSIDE THE CAMPAIGN

by Alex Conway

A year ago, at the Millions for Mumia actions, the crowds were dotted by red and black anarchist flags. The anarchist presence dominated the ground in Philadelphia—by far the largest contingent. Anarchists have been active in the Free Mumia movement across the United States and around the world. But to date we have taken relatively little role in shaping that movement. If our ideas are once again to become a powerful force in the radical movement, much less if we are to realize our vision, then anarchists need to develop our organizational strength and to find ways of putting forward a distinctly anarchist politics while working within broader coalitions.

In this brief article, I try to examine some of the strengths and weaknesses of our participation in the Free Mumia movement thus far, and to suggest some of the broader implications for how we address movement building as a whole. I have been involved in this

campaign since the early 1990s, mostly working with International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ) on worldwide public outreach. During this time, many anarchists have adopted Mumia's case as a major priority, but our work has not been nearly as effective as it could be.



An anarchist outlook on the case

Mumia does not simply need a new trial—he needs to be set free. Work around this case offers an important opportunity to raise

Mumia does not need a new trial...

critical issues and advance an anarchist perspective. The Mumia case offers a concrete demonstration of the complete bankruptcy of the criminal system. It raises questions of police brutality, of racism, and of the state's repressive nature. The sheer barbarism of the prison system and the death penalty are similarly exposed.



photo: James W. Harris

BLACK FLAGS, BLACK BLOCS AND MUMIA ABU JAMAL

Many of those working around the Mumia case can not speak to these issues, because they in fact support a regime of police, courts, prisons and executions.

Meanwhile, many liberals have abandoned their traditional realm of electoral politics and building popular support for their reforms in favor of appealing to the courts to resolve social problems. But the Mumia case makes it crystal clear that we can not look to the courts for justice. Mumia was convicted by the court; his case has been heard at every level of the appellate system, and while appeals are still pending, thus far none of the dozens of judges who have reviewed his case has administered any justice. If Mumia is freed it will be because our movement successfully persuades the ruling class that anything else will be too politically expensive—Mumia will not be freed through the normal workings of the injustice system.

But while Mumia's case is a potent illustration of the bankruptcy of the judicial system it also presents some difficulties in this regard. The violations of Mumia's basic legal rights—supposedly guaranteed by the US legal system—are so obvious and so overwhelming that it is easy for people to see this as an anomalous case of police and

prosecutorial misconduct which the courts will surely correct once the facts are presented to them in the proper legal fashion. Police beat black people every day, just like they were beating Mumia's brother. Police often fabricate evidence, intimidate witnesses and manufacture fake confessions. The Mumia case presents an excellent example of this, both in terms of how the case against Mumia himself was manufactured, and also in terms of the broader workings of the Philadelphia police department. But this is not the core of the problem. As anarchists, we would still oppose the police-prison system even if it was "fairly" administered. The difficult but essential task is to find ways to expose the specific injustices in Mumia's case while at the same time pointing to the fundamental injustice of the system we oppose.

Racial diversity—or at least the first steps

When anarchists call for organizing a "black bloc" in Mumia demonstrations, we're very likely to be misunderstood. A disturbing number of rallies, activist groups, and other public events for Mumia are not racially diverse.

If you are white, (which is most usually the largest racial grouping in "black blocs" at demonstrations I've been to) imagine finding an e-mail call for a "white bloc." It would naturally strike you as very strange. Perhaps eventually you'd come to find that white was the official color of a political tendency relatively unknown to you. And imagine how surprised you would be if there was not a single white person in the so-called "white bloc." These were the real reactions to the "black bloc" I observed in meetings up to and after the Millions for Mumia

march from African American organizers of the march. At the very least, let's drop the insider lingo.

To our credit, while anarchists have made up the largest part of many recent Mumia demonstrations, I feel our groups have distinguished ourselves by our behavior. While the vanguard parties wander around selling newspapers and annoying people, the anarchists have mobilized people to march in the streets. We need to expand this by not just looking for the "usual suspects" to fill out our ranks. Freedom Summer, a program that brought students and youth to Philadelphia for activist training and grassroots organizing, did an excellent job of the kind of door-to-door activism normally left to non-profit "professionals." They picked areas of our city where it was thought we needed to develop contacts, and then pounded the pavement to discuss the case, the larger implications of the issues it raises, and try to get commitments from people interested in doing activist work.

Much more work to be done

While anarchists have been active in the case for many years, they have left the lion's share of the organizing work to others. Organizing demonstrations, raising funds for legal defense, and building the Mumia movement has, outside of ICFMAJ, largely been left to a gaggle of Communist parties. Had Mumia had to rely on the anarchist movement he would be dead now. Thus far our movement has failed to build the kind of organizational structures and develop the capacity to organize defense work on an adequate scale.

It is clear to anyone who has attended recent Mumia actions that the largest part of the crowd is associated with the anarchist movement—we're very good attendees. The groups which dominate the speaker's platforms and push their authoritarian newspapers down people's throats are able to do so precisely because the anarchist movement—like other movements Mumia has worked closely with—presently lack the organizational capacity to take on the necessary tasks, leaving the field wide open for authoritarians. If we take ourselves as a movement seriously, we need to address this problem.

While there are tens of thousands of people in North America who would call themselves anarchists, there is little that could be described as "an anarchist movement." There is an infoshop or bookstore here or there, a couple of locally distributed newspapers (sometimes quite good, but rarely well established in their communities), and some other small publishing projects. But there is no national—let alone international—coordination of our efforts, and too little work is put into organizing strong anarchist movements in our communities. The organizing we do is rarely tied in any explicit, open way to our anarchist politics, leaving our movement invisible even to many of the people we work most closely with.

The state will not vanish of its own accord, nor will it set Mumia free because it suddenly recognizes the error of its ways. We need to build a movement, along with strong anarchist organizations and struggles, capable of making that happen. Until then, all we'll be doing is bracing for more of the same.

ROB THE RICH!

Jailhouse Writings by Political Prisoner
Robert Thaxton aka Rob los Ricos



art work: Tony

Review the Rich

by Ernie Jacob

This pamphlet is a collection of six short jailhouse essays by Robert Thaxton, an Oregon anarchist serving a seven year sentence for his role in the June 18, 1999 riot in Eugene, Oregon. It also includes a brief description, written by others, of the legal aspects of his case and a political overview of the struggle he is part of.

How can you not like an argument headed by a quote from the Sex Pistols, "...they made you a moron—potential H-bomb..."?

Just as the rulers of Britain first found the Sex Pistols impossible to deal with, but quickly found the way to put them to good use as a marketing style, Thaxton and his friends take a stance that will initially startle and perplex power, but not for long.

Remember that a few lines further along in the same song, Johnny Rotten sings,

"...There's no future in England's dreaming! No future for you, no future for me, no future for you..."

What is good about Thaxton's piece is the complete rejection of capitalist power and culture and its refusal to accept the capitalist rules of the game in any area. What's bad is the naivete with which it presents the fact of rejection as if it amounts to a program of action. Indeed there

is a flavor of elitism directed against those unwilling or unable to take the steps it deems necessary.

"Our society jumps according to the dictates of the factory. Most people accept this unquestioningly. Most people are not only unwilling to take a critical glance at these imposed conditions of their lives, but are actually incapable of doing so."

"What is to be done about all these imbeciles? Those of us unwilling to perpetuate the domination of imbecility must break free of its grasp. We must learn to care and provide for ourselves and invite others to share in our adventures in self-discovery."

These writings lhave no conception of the insurgent and revolutionary potential of average people who, lacking the various privileges of youth, education, and economic possibilities, cannot and will not be spending their summers in rural southern Oregon, "...living without the industrial monster."

I read these proclamations urging constant attacks on the system, rejection of all compromises, "building insurrection without recourse to leaders or vanguards," and I think this is great radical stuff. The ruling class, as it is prone to do, checks it out and decides, probably sooner rather than later, that enough is enough. Where among the imbeciles will you find the solidarity and support you are going to need? You're not going to be invisible in Southern Oregon or anywhere else unless you shut up and cool it.

"No future for you", I'm afraid.

Contact the author at
ernie_jacob_2000@yahoo.com and
www.geocities.com/ernie_jacob_2000/seattle.html

THE BATTLE FOR OUR LIVES

Jason Wade & Steve Swart

Undoubtedly, the events that unfolded on November 29th through December 3rd in Seattle, Washington changed the terms of debate of what is possible and what is desirable in our fight against global capitalism. Not in the past 20 years has an action by the left in the US had such an impact; people across the world have taken notice. Over 70,000 people took to the streets to shut down the WTO (World Trade Organization); and we did it. The action was diverse and energetic. People dressed in turtle outfits stood along side those in black masks. Union bureaucrats milled about in a crowd filled with people with u-locks around their necks. Obviously the crowd was not entirely anarchist, but the main day of action, November 30th (N30 as some anarchists have coined it), was built on anarchist principles: decentralism, autonomy, diversity and direct action.

Beyond anyone's wildest dreams, N30 was a success that was hard to ignore; government officials as well as folks in our workplaces and neighborhoods were among those affected by the events in Seattle. The challenge that now stands before us as anarchists is how to move forward rather than become stagnant, or in the worst case scenario—get crushed. To move forward we must engage in debate that looks at the very principles that built N30 and see how they can be better applied to the world around us.

In Detroit, N30 has caused endless debate, sometimes harsh, sometimes ugly but always enlighten-



photo: Keith Graham

ing. In these discussions two main points have been recognized as important things that the anarchist movement needs to address: How do we deal with being thrust into the spotlight?; Why was N30 so white?

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

Unless folks lived underneath a rock on November 30th, people saw something about the streets of Seattle. While the corporate media filtered out a lot of what happened, they seemed unable or unwilling to turn a blind eye to Seattle. Perhaps the sensationalism of police riots, black blocs and trashed Nike and GAP stores was inescapable. Or maybe because live footage was being streamed out on the web and on international news reports, the major US press had no choice but do what they normally don't do: cover the left in the US. It wasn't that they just covered it though, they did special features on it. Columns in major newspapers attempted to define and explain anarchism. Dan Rather was looking into the camera and talking about direct action. Suddenly "@" meant "organized anarchism."



photo: Keith Graham

THE BATTLE FOR OUR LIVES

Overnight the world was informed of something that we weren't even sure of yet; there is an organized, international anarchist movement. This has a lot of different implications, the most important one being the state has definitely taken notice. For the IMF/World Bank action on April 16 & 17th, DC cops have already been to Seattle and attended special FBI "Seattle" training. They are scrambling to figure out how we "work." What is sure to follow will be classic stuff that we should prepare for: Provocateurish and disruptive behavior in meetings and demos; disinformation in the press, threatening phone calls, ominous disinformation being spread between groups in solidarity with each other. These are things we need to prepare for. Something we saw in the streets of Seattle, state violence, will become more widespread.

How do we fight back against this? Roger, an anarchist from Detroit, breaks it down like this, "we have no base, we need to build one. We need to get out in to the streets and talk to people. So much of the anarchist movement is caught up in its own ghetto, and is not very approachable. We need to do this if we ever hope to kick over capitalism, and, in all honesty, we need to do it to save our own necks... We are a lot less likely to get crushed if people know we

exist." Even in a city like Detroit, a city that boasts five anarchist/anti-authoritarian newspapers (*Active Transformation*, *Fifth Estate*, *La Xicanada*, *The Drum* and *The Industrial Worker*), people realize that there is still a lot of work to be done that explains the work that we do and where we are coming from. Something that Jane from Detroit points out is, "if we don't reach out and talk to the people that are turned on by anarchism, someone else will. After Seattle, you can already see people in the authoritarian Left change their verbiage so that they sound like anarchists. Not that they are necessarily making a shift in their perspective, but they understand the game of co-optation."

SOME LINES YOU DON'T WANT DRAWN IN THE SAND

Rachel, a Black anarchist in Detroit, was relating a story the other day in which when she was young her whole family went to "historical" Williamsburg, Virginia. The idea was that it was to be a recreation of Williamsburg as it was back in 1750. They had people in colonial dress, horse drawn carriages, etc. But after 10 minutes there, her whole family realized something. There were no Black people. The obvious reason being that in 1750 Africans in Williamsburg were slaves and rather than deal with this ugly and complex part of US history, the tourist industry of Williamsburg ignored it. It seems a lot of the white activists in Seattle did the same exact thing. That is, ignore people of color and rewrite history.

While there were over 70,000 people out in the streets of Seattle shutting down the WTO, less than

5% were people of color. This is in contrast to the fact that the WTO's neoliberal policies disproportionately affect people of color the world over. The labor unions were some of the worst offenders in this white liberal rewriting of history. While it makes sense that people would stand up and take notice when their standard of living is being eroded, as is happening to the US working class, it doesn't make sense that US workers would see themselves as the hardest hit. Because they are not.

Neoliberals have encouraged the deconstruction of the welfare state around the world, and generally they have used the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to do it. With every bailout to "third world" nations come the attached strings of privatizing national economies and opening up markets to foreign investors. This has led to the attack on the people of Mexico (from Chiapas, to UNAM, to the electricians), and helped encourage the continued environmental and labor exploitation of countries like Nigeria. The social costs to these cuts are of no consequence to the WTO, the IMF or the World Bank; one has to just look to the South Pacific to see that.

While it is true that the US working classes' standard of living is slipping, we are hardly the worst off. There are concrete reasons for this. For the most part the American working class has turned its back on the rest of the world. The AFL-CIO seems oblivious to the fact that their unwillingness to build international ties with workers around the world is a contributing factor to the mess we have now. And while internationally most unions have come to this realization, a lot of the Left in the US seems more than satisfied



photo: Keith Graham

with the AFL's realization that "12 year-old Indonesian sweatshop workers" do exist. Most of the Left, though, fails to analyze how they exist. Do they exist as active partners in a fight against capitalism or as cannon fodder for John Sweeney to show how "international" he is?

Many of the activists that came out to Seattle were young students and older people who came for altruistic reasons. They are outraged over injustice happening to the "Other" people. Those people over there. The reality is that an altruistic, guilt ridden liberal movement will not challenge the WTO or the IMF. They will be bought out by the slightest reform. As anarchists, we need to help these young students to understand the connection between their psychological oppression and the material oppression of workers (especially women and children) around the world. As long as the movement is based around issues affecting the "Other," the movement will remain mostly white.

Seattle did show that lots of unionized workers are angry and are looking for new solutions to their shrinking share of the wealth. It also showed that many of them are tired of the bureaucrats, and may be willing to go in more radical directions if they seem to be



photo: Keith Graham

effective. There are progressive people in most of the unions, but few are willing to look beyond reform for an answer. The workers we need to be the most concerned with are the unorganized mass of workers who have the most to gain from asking more difficult questions. It's the young women and men of color who can't find decent paying jobs who will be a part of a revolutionary solution. It's the moms on AFDC who are gonna get their benefits completely cut next year because of "liberal welfare reform" that know that no reform is gonna make their lives better. It's the Xicana and Asian women, so-called immigrants, who work in sweatshops, not in some distant land, but here in New York, Michigan, LA, wherever, who have seen that the "American Dream" is a lie perpetrated across the world. It's the kids who, because of "zero tolerance," are forced out of high schools so easily now without a care on the part of administrators that have to choose between minimum wage or a life of crime, or both.

Under the Clinton administration the number of people in prison has more than doubled. These people are increasingly Black and Brown and more and more every day are women. They are almost all poor, and mostly accused of non-violent crimes. It is a genocidal class war going on here at home. It is these folks that have a

stake in smashing the state and capital. We have to struggle around these "everyday life" issues if we hope to build a more multiracial movement. This is also necessary if we hope to build a movement that is effective. This obviously doesn't mean we should ignore the large struggles against global capitalism, but that we have to understand the connection between near and far in a revolutionary way. The same companies that want to make sure South Africa does not get cheaper, generic AIDS medication, are the same companies that ensure that most Americans won't have adequate healthcare coverage. We have to see the victims of globalization as ourselves. Working and unemployed people suffer because capitalism is thievery. We don't need to "help foreigners get exploited less." We need to push the movement to connect issues that make us natural international allies. A movement led by white liberals won't do this.

It is up to us as working people who want to destroy capitalism to force the movement to take notice and get off the fence. You can't have progressive capitalism. Things are just going to get worse and worse for more and more people, not to mention the Earth, the longer we allow the bosses to reign. We need to take the momentum from the anti-global-capitalism struggles and connect them with struggles against police brutality, for health care, against welfare cutbacks, for better access to education, struggles that grow from our neighborhoods, and build a serious revolutionary critique, vision, and movement to redistribute power back to our everyday lives.

#918 VIRGINIA ST.

by Libby Caraccioli

At 11:00 PM, on Nov. 28, 1999 more than 80 anarchists and anti-authoritarians, under the banner of free housing as a basic human right, occupied the top two vacant floors of a large three story building at #918 Virginia St., half a block from downtown Seattle's main police station. They held that space for the next six days despite constant pressure and surveillance by the landlord, police, and later in the week, the FBI. When they did agree to yield the space it was only after the squat's negotiating team won a good faith agreement with the landlord that the building would be leased to Share/Wheel, a homeless advocacy group who would turn it into a low income cooperative. There was a condition though: no one from the squat would be involved. Almost as soon as they left, the landlord reneged and denied the existence of any such agreement. He's probably returned to his old plan for the space: install an elevator and rent the spaces as deluxe artists lofts. A hundred people could live comfortably on those two floors, but he'll get top dollar from twelve.

This "housing action" was a campaign of three main fronts: physical occupation and habitation of the building; relations with the landlord and police; and public relations. The thousands of square feet in the squat's twelve lofts were assigned to various purposes; meeting hall, kitchen, shop/rec room with milk crate basket ball hoop, sleeping quarters, a banner and flag painting room. A security team with radio handsets controlled access through the front barricade. Liaisons from the squat, doing their best to maintain communication and consensus with the group, met regularly with the landlord, police and two outside groups, Seattle's Low Income Housing Institute, and Share/Wheel. Their goal was to see the squat turned into permanent cooperative apartments. Having put out a pamphlet about the squat and sent out a press release Sunday night (television cameras were on the scene before the police were aware of the action) the squat was in close contact with the media throughout the week, receiving good and bad press. Banners hung from the roof: "WTO MEANS MARTIAL LAW AND EVERYBODY SAW", "RENT IS THEFT." Their flag, the Jolly Worker, a hammer and saw crossed behind a skull, flew high and proud above them.

An ultimatum from the police came Friday night: at 10:00am they would put up a barricade around the block, gas the building and storm it with any "necessary" force. A consensus meeting was held; people chose between locking down



art work: Tony

inside or getting out. At 9am, those who were leaving filed out onto the street to wait for the cops. Some locked down in front of the door. A substantial crew stayed inside, watching from windows and the roof. The negotiating team was meeting with the landlord and others. 10am came, without cops. "The ultimatum's been pushed back to 11am." 11am came, police had been sighted two blocks away, two or three vans full, waiting, suited in riot gear. "The cops are coming at 12noon" 12:04pm brought no physical assault, but news from the negotiating team: in a deal brokered by an agent from HUD, the landlord had made a "good faith" agreement to lease the building to Share/Wheel. The squatters danced in the street, shouting in relief, elated by a happy end to a hard week, suppressing their suspicions about "good faith".

The moral of the story? Direct action gets the goods. Sadly, in the case of the squat at 918 Virginia St., and with so many similar situations, negotiating with the owner and cops amounted to no more than an acknowledgment of the their power. The power of the people is in their own hands and in solidarity with each other. Next time, perhaps the bargaining table should be used for a barricade.

Housing Takeover Review

THIS ISN'T WORKING



GLOBAL ECONOMY
CORPORATE CONTROL
MASS MEDIA
POLLUTION
WAGE SLAVERY
HOMELESSNESS
UNEMPLOYMENT
INEQUALITY
POVERTY
PRISONS
APATHY

I NEED COMMUNITY

KARAOKE

by Hillary Sea

I read a lot of science fiction. Science fiction, like revolutionary theory, is concerned with change. What can be changed, and what impact that change has on the quality of our lives. But often, some changes go unnoticed in the barrage of others. Recently, I was reading a short story about time travel. I don't remember the author, the title, or even the point of the story. But what I do remember was an observation the protagonist made after landing in the 1920's. People were singing in the streets, and once he heard their voices, he realized people no longer did that in his time.

It hit me then that people no longer sing in the streets in my own time, or at home, while cooking or driving, or cleaning. I haven't even heard anyone singing in the shower recently. I've only been alive 25 years, but all these things were common when I was a child, and now they are almost universally absent. We are no longer a culture that raises its voice in joy. It's a change that may be easy to miss, because music is still alive

and well; but it is something that is no longer participated in. We buy CD's, pay to go to shows, and listen to the radio (with all the attendant advertising), but we don't participate.

As anarchists, especially those of us from the DIY punk community, I think this should sadden us. As much as music makes us feel good when we listen to it, it makes us feel even better when we're belting it out at the top of our lungs. Sing a bar of your favorite song right now. Feel the music vibrate in your body, and tell me it doesn't feel good. Song is a way to express our sadness and our joy, to catalogue our grievances, to hope and plan. It's a way to celebrate our victories, and to pass on the stories we know won't make it into the history textbooks. And isn't that what we intend to do when we talk about creating culture? But most people I know, including myself, have been conned into thinking that our voices are too ugly to use, and the only way we can enjoy music is to listen (and purchase).

I was a veteran chanteuse of the rolling down the highway/windows shut school

of performance art, but froze up at the thought of singing in front of my friends. I was one of those people that made fun of karaoke bars, and always said, "naw, I can't sing" at the campfire. But I want that to change. This is why I'm starting the Anarchist Karaoke Project. I got dragged to a Country and Western Karaoke Bar about a year ago, and I'm hooked. There's a whole room of people that are there to have fun, who don't care if you don't sound like Elvis or Aretha Franklin, and you don't even have to have all the words memorized.

There are a million amazing songs out there, from the traditions of blues, country, folk, labor, bluegrass, punk, hip hop, pop, that I don't know the words to, would love to sing, and are never going to appear on the song list at a karaoke bar. This is where you, dear reader, come in. I would like to start compiling a revolutionary karaoke collection. So at the next gathering, party, or bonfire, we can sing the songs that really mean something to us, loud and without fear of sounding stupid. I don't know if it will end up being lyric sheets with background tapes or something fancier.

Left to my own devices it will probably end up being no more complex than lyric sheets, akin to the little red song book (which is a great resource, but I still only know what about three of those songs actually sound like).

So I'm asking for help, both technical and inspirational. I would love suggestions about rad songs that should be included in the collection, either because of their politics or personal importance; and I desperately need technical and technological assistance. So please write me at 4202 Trumbull, Detroit MI 48208.



art work: Josh McPhee

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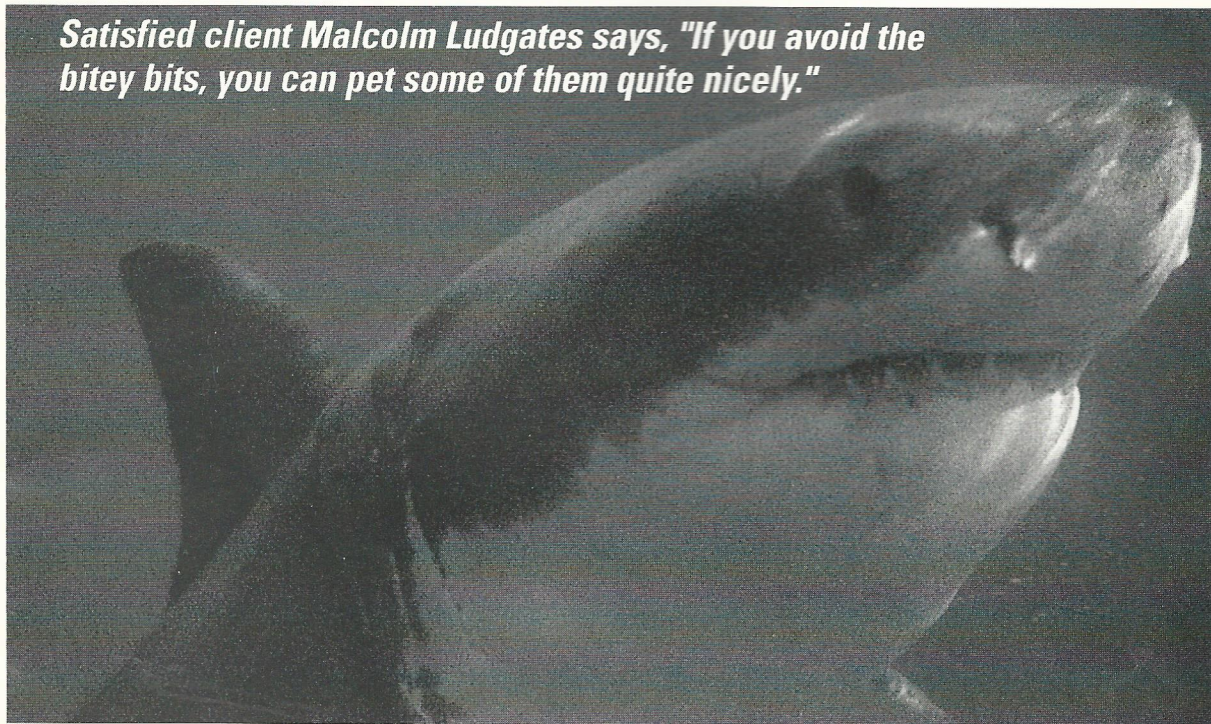
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For anarchy to succeed or simply advance towards its success, it must be conceived not only as a lighthouse which illuminates and attracts but as something possible and attainable, not in centuries to come but in a relatively short time and without relying on miracles. Now, we anarchists have much concerned ourselves with the ideal; we have criticized all the moral lies and institutions which corrupt and oppress humanity, and have described, with all the eloquence and poetry each of us possessed, a longed-for harmonious society, based on goodness and on love; but it must be admitted that we have shown very little concern with the ways and means for the achievement of our ideals.

Malatesta 1924